

## Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 SAM-01 IO-11 AID-05 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04

SIL-01 STR-04 CEA-01 AGR-05 OES-03 BIB-01 CU-02 /124 W

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R 021000Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6021

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMCONSUL CHIENG MAI

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAIR, UR, LA

SUBJECT: SOVIET AID TO LAOS

1. ACCORDING TO MINISTRY OF INFORMATION'S OFFICIAL LAO PRESS BULLETIN OF JANUARY 31, A CEREMONY WAS HELD IN VIENTIANE JANUARY 30 TO MARK THE TURN-OVER OF CERTAIN ITEMS OF SOVIET AID TO THE LAO GOVERNMENT. THE CEREMONY WAS PRESIDED OVER BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR VDOVINE, AND HEAD OF LAO NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE PLAN MA KHAYKHAMPHITHOUN. IN HIS SPEECH ON THIS OCCASION AMBASSADOR VDOVINE REVIEWED PAST AND FUTURE SOVIET AID TO LAOS. PORTIONS OF SPEECH ARE TRANSLATED BELOW.

2. BEGIN QUOTE. IN CONFORMITY WITH THE PROTOCOL OF 4 APRIL 1975, SIGNED IN VIENTIANE, FOOD PRODUCTS AND OTHER COMMODITIES  
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NECESSARY FOR THE NATIONAL ECONOMY HAVE BEEN DELIVERED TO LAOS

SUCH AS: FLOUR, CONCENTRATED AND POWERED MILK, CANNED MEAT AND FISH, MEDICINE, GASOLINE, CLOTH, NEWSPRINT AND OTHER ITEMS -- IN ALL 7800 CASES, 2670 TONS OF GASOLINE, 130,000 METERS OF CLOTH, 200 TONS OF PAPER. THE SOVIET SIDE PAID FOR ALL THE COSTS OF TRANSPORT TO VIENTIANE. THE DELIVERY OF GASOLINE IS CONTINUING. NOT ALL OF THE COMMODITIES HAVE YET BEEN DELIVERED BECAUSE OF THE UNILATERAL CLOSURE OF THE LAO-THAI BORDER BY THE THAI AUTHORITIES IN NOVEMBER-DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR. WE WERE OBLIGED TO RESHIP URGENTLY PART OF THE MERCHANDISE (MEDICINE, CLOTH, CANNED GOODS, UTENSILS) TO THE PORTS OF VIETNAM, AND THIS MERCHANDISE WILL SOON BE DELIVERED TO LAOS. TO TRANSPORT OUR SHIPMENTS AND OTHER MERCHANDISE DESTINED FOR LAOS, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT PROVIDED AIRPLANES WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEGUN AND WILL CONTINUE TO ASSURE FLIGHTS BETWEEN VIETNAM AND LAOS.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OCCASION TO INFORM YOU THAT RECENTLY IT WAS DECIDED AT MOSCOW TO GRANT THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF LAOS SUBSTANTIAL NEW ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR THE YEARS 1976-77. AS YOU KNOW, THE AGREEMENT SIGNED IN MOSCOW AT THE BEGINNING OF 1976, ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF WHICH THE SOVIET UNION GIVES LAOS FREE ASSISTANCE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CITY, OF A 150-BED HOSPITAL WITH GENERAL CLINIC, OF BRIDGES, OF A GARAGE TO REPAIR AUTOMOBILES AND OF A GASOLINE DEPOT, IS BEING SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED...

IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT AT ALL STAGES OF THE STRUGGLE OF LAO PATRIOTS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE LAP PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY FOR NATIONAL AND SOCIAL LIBERATION, THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND OUR WHOLE PEOPLE GAVE MANY AND VARIED KINDS OF ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO THE LAO REVOLUTION. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAO-SOVIET COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL AVIATION SERVES AS A BRILLIANT EXAMPLE OF THIS. MOSCOW AND VIENTIANE HAVE BEEN LINKED BY A DIRECT AIR ROUTE FOR FIVE YEARS NOW. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAS SENT LAOS AN-24, YAK-40 AND AN-2 AIRPLANES AND MI-8 HELICOPTERS WITH THEIR CREWS IN ORDER TO ASSIST YOU IN ACCOMPLISHING THE PRACTICAL TASKS TO PROVIDE AIR LINKS BETWEEN SEPARATE REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY, TO TRANSPORT CARGO, AND TO CREATE THE CIVIL AVIATION SYSTEM OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF LAOS.

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IT IS PLEASANT TO REMARK THAT SOVIET AND LAO PILOTS FLY SOVIET AIRPLANES AND HELICOPTERS TOGETHER.

THE SOVIET UNION HAS GIVEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE SUBSTANTIAL AID TO LAOS IN THE AREA OF TRAINING OF NATIONAL OFFICIALS ("CADRES"). SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELDS OF MEDICINE, AGRICULTURE, TRANSPORT AND GEOLOGY WITH SOVIET DIPLOMAS ARE WORKING IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF LAOS. WE NOTE WITH SATISFACTION

THE IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL LINKS BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PDRL. THESE LINKS INCLUDE MEDICINE, ART, THE CINEMA, SPORT AND OTHER FIELDS. CONTACTS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING LABOR, YOUTH, WOMEN AND OTHER PUBLIC GROUPS ARE DEVELOPING BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES...END QUOTE.

3. SAME EDITION OF LAO PRESS BULLETIN WHICH CARRIED VDOVINE'S SPEECH ALSO CARRIED NOTICE OF RETURN TO LAOS ON JANUARY 31 OF LAO ECONOMIC DELEGATION HEADED BY SOUK SAYSOMPHENG, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, WHICH WENT TO USSR ON JANUARY 24 "TO UNDERTAKE NEGOTIATIONS ON SOVIET ECONOMIC AID TO LAOS FOR 1976".

4. COMMENT: VDOVINE'S SPEECH PROVIDES A USEFUL REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SOVIET AID PROGRAMS TO LAOS. THERE IS LITTLE NEW IN THE SPEECH, BUT IS EMPHASIS ON SOVIET COOPERATION IN THE "CREATION" OF A CIVIL AVIATION SYSTEM FOR LAOS AND ON "SUBSTANTIAL NEW ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE" FOR LAOS IS WORTH NOTING. END COMMENT.  
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